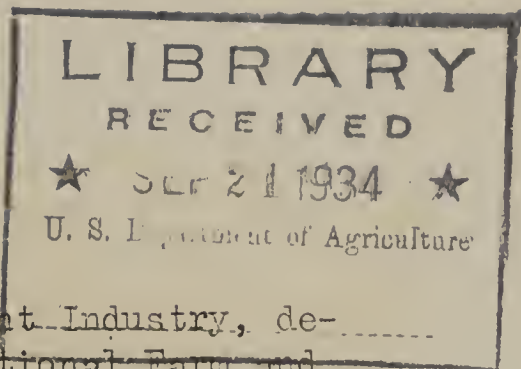


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THE GARDEN CALENDAR

A radio discussion by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast over a network of 50 associate NBC radio stations, Thursday, September 13, 1934.

How do you do folks? Today I want to give you my semi-annual discussion on "Keeping up appearances," or what to do this fall in order that our homes may appear at their best next summer. Good rains have fallen over most of the country and we still have a month or more in the northern parts and plenty of time in the southern parts to get our lawns and ornamental plantings worked over and replanted where necessary. In most sections there is now enough moisture in the soil to make it safe to transplant evergreens and other ornamental plants.

Suppose we take a look at the lawn first. My own lawn looks pretty good right now but I realize that its good looks are only skin deep for the soil is poor and shallow and the grass is largely crab grass that will be killed with the first hard frost. What I should do is to dig that lawn up to a depth of about 8 or 10 inches and work a lot of bone meal and compost into the soil then topdress with fertilizer and reseed with a good lawn grass mixture. Perhaps I will get real energetic and carry that program through, perhaps not, time will tell.

There are thousands of lawns throughout the regions where drought reigned supreme this summer, lawns that are badly burned out and will need treatment this fall to bring them back. In case you have a lawn that is in this condition but where there is a one-third stand of bluegrass, or whatever the main grass may be, it may pay best to topdress it with fertilizer, bone meal preferred, and then sow a liberal supply of lawn grass seed. This work should be done right away so that the grass will become established before cold weather. You folks in the south may have the problem of getting a supply of clumps of grass from some pasture or meadow and transferring them to your lawn to fill in the bare places. Anyway, and whatever the method best adapted to your locality, now is a good time to do this lawn renovating and have your lawn in shape for next summer.

So much for the lawn, now how about the shrubbery plantings around your home. Have any of your shrubs died during the summer? If so how about replacing them. Now is perhaps the best time of the year to plant evergreens, now while there is moisture to aid in holding a good ball of earth about their roots and also to give a good root growth before cold weather. Deciduous shrubs, that is those that shed their leaves in winter, should not be moved until their leaves have fallen but they can be moved almost anytime during the late fall, the winter and early spring when the ground is in condition to work. Your local nursery man or the horticultural specialist at your State college can give you safe advice regarding the best kinds of evergreens and deciduous shrubs to plant in your locality and on your soil. There is nothing that so improves the appearance of a home as a good lawn and shrubbery plantings around the house foundations and it doesn't cost much to improve appearances by this kind of planting.

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Now is the time to be planting certain flowers for early spring bloom. Take bulbs for example, you can plant tulips and daffodils right up to the time for cold weather but they do much better if planted fairly early so that they will form plenty of roots before the ground gets cold. If you dig up a bulb that has remained in the ground all summer you would find that it has put on a lot of feeding roots. You folks who live in the south have more latitude in the matter of time of planting but don't put off too long. Bulbs are now for sale in the stores, and you can buy any number from a single bulb up to thousands depending upon your pocketbook. As for me, I've been wearing an old pair of shoes so that I can buy a couple hundred tulip bulbs this month. Don't fail to prepare your soil deep and make it fine and mellow before you plant your bulbs, and, put them in fairly deep, say 4 to 6 inches.

Peonies are one of the most lovely of our spring-blooming hardy plants, that is, in the sections where they will grow. Right now is the proper time to plant peonies for blooming spring after next and many springs to follow. The main points in planting peonies is to get good healthy root sections having about two good buds for planting, to prepare the soil 18 or 20 inches deep and work a half pint of bone meal into the soil of each hill and to tramp or firm the soil in the holes so that it will not settle. The other point is - when you plant your peony roots be sure that the crown buds are exactly 2 inches below the surface. Many of the failures are due to setting the peony roots too deep and 2 inches is considered the best depth by those who have had the most experience. In the more northern sections 2 inches may not be quite deep enough but in the latitude of Washington, D. C., two inches is the proper depth.

Peonies want plenty of space and the plants should be set at least 3 feet apart in each direction. The newly set plants should be mounded over with soil the first winter but the mounds should be leveled early in the spring before the buds start. You folks who live in the sections where peonies do not thrive, have a great many perennial plants that you can grow, and now is a good time to get a start for next season, so let's all get busy and doll up our home surroundings a trifle this fall.